

NOTES ON GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION

Reptilia, Serpentes, Elapidae, *Micrurus serranus*: distribution extension

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Bolivia presents a high biodiversity that generally is poorly known mainly due to the lack of studies. This is the case especially for the Bolivian herpetofauna. Recent herpetological inventories and assessments were carried out in several areas of Bolivia. They are revealing very interesting data that will help to understand more about the distribution of the Bolivian species of reptiles and amphibians.

Ten species of *Micrurus* are known for Bolivia (Harvey et al. 2003; Gonzales and Reichle 2003; Embert 2007) and most of them are distributed in lowlands. Only *Micrurus serranus* occurs in the interandean dry valleys of Bolivia reaching an elevation of 2150 m (Harvey et al. 2003). A relatively recently described species, *Micrurus serranus*, is a small coral snake (maximum size 822 mm in total length), that inhabits interandean dry valleys of Bolivia (Gonzales et al. 2006). Werner (1927) described *Elaps* (*Micrurus*) *frontifasciatus* based on a specimen from Bolivia without record of specific locality. Other specimens from interandean dry valleys in the Departments of Cochabamba and Santa Cruz were assigned to this species. After a revision of the *M. frontifasciatus* holotype, Harvey et al. (2003) concluded it could be assigned to *M. lemniscatus*. Bolivian specimens from the interandean dry valleys were then considered by Harvey et al. (2003) as *Micrurus serranus*. In this work they only had records of this endemic species for the interandean dry valleys of Santa Cruz and

Cochabamba, where it occurs in elevations between 1200 and 2150 m. Most specimens are recorded from Santa Cruz in Florida Province. One photograph of a specimen from Aiquile (18°11' S, 65°11' W) 2150 m in Campero Province is reported by Campbell and Lamar (1989). Embert (2007) modeled the distribution of *M. serranus* suggesting it can occupy the interandean dry valley areas in Santa Cruz, Cochabamba, Chuquisaca, Potosí and Tarija.

In 17 May 2007 we found an adult female specimen of *Micrurus serranus* (SVL 481 mm; tail length 34 mm; Figure 1) in *El Vergel* (18°06'56" S, 65°46'05" W; 2750 m elevation), 2.5 km North from Torotoro town, Potosí Department (Figure 2). The specimen was found under a rock, during the day, in a sandy and rocky area with little herbaceous vegetation and some small trees. The agriculture is the main activity in area, with several plantations of corn, potatoes and wheat, among others. The specimen was deposited in the *Museo de Historia Natural Alcide d'Orbigny* (MHNC-R 130), Cochabamba, Bolivia.

This is the first departmental record for the species and the genus, the most occidental and the record of highest elevation for this species. It is also probably the record of highest elevation for any coral snakes in Bolivia. This record is about 62.5 km from the closest locality in Aiquile, and 165 Km from Mataral, in Santa Cruz from where a specimen is available (Figure 2).

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Figure 1. Specimen of *Micrurus serranus* (MHNC-R 130) from *El Vergel Parque Nacional Torotoro*, Potosí, Bolivia.

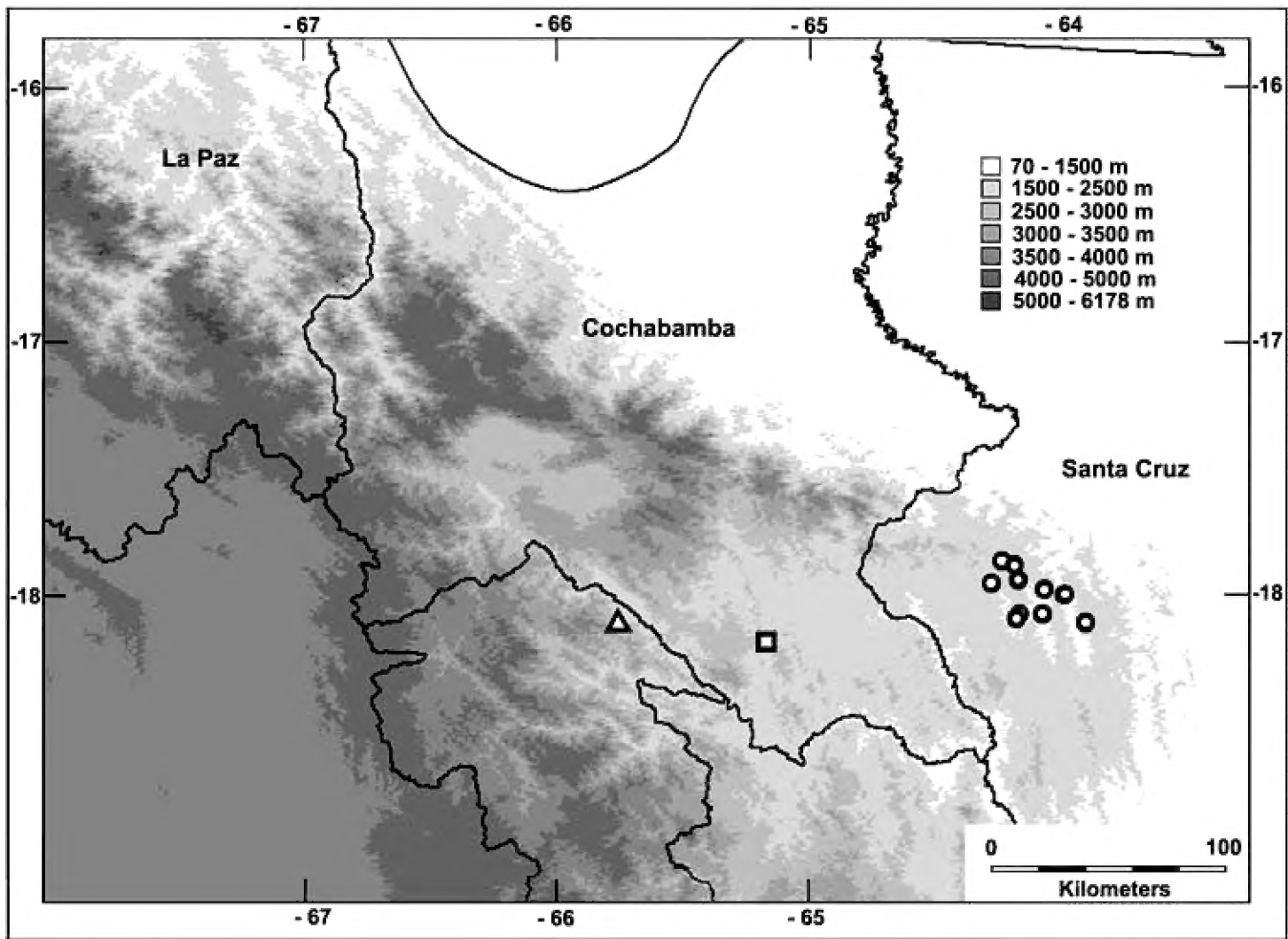


Figure 2. Distribution of *Micrurus serranus*: specimens from Santa Cruz Department (circles); photographed specimen from Cochabamba (square); and the new record from Potosí (triangle).

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The specimen presents the following characters: dorsals 15-15-15; supralabials 7 / 7; supralabials in contact with eye 3-4 / 3-4; preocular 1 / 1; postocular 2 / 2; temporals 1+1 / 1+1; infralabials 7 / 7; infralabials in contact with first chinshield 1-3 / 1-3; infralabials in contact with second chinshield 3-4 / 3-4; ventrals 220; subcaudals 24; anal plate divided; 12 triads throughout the body; triads in tail 1+1 / 3; 2 vertebrals from the edge of the parietals to the first triad.

We expect that more specimens can be found in some valleys of north Cochabamba and Chuquisaca Department, where the species is likely to be found due to similarities in habitat and bioclimatic conditions. At the moment, other species of the genus are not known to be sympatric with *M. serranus*. The species with closer occurrence in this area is *M. pyrrhocryptus*, reported from the Bolivian Tucuman Forest and the Mountain Chaco, in Santa Cruz and Chuquisaca, reaching 2000 m of elevation.

Acknowledgments

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